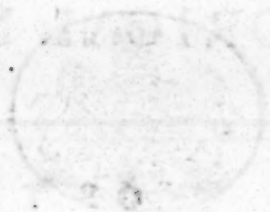

A SHORT
HISTORICAL NARRATIVE
OF THE
MAHRATTAH STATE.

STATE OF NEW YORK



STATE OF NEW YORK

A SHORT
HISTORICAL NARRATIVE
OF
THE RISE AND RAPID ADVANCEMENT
OF THE
MAHRATTAH STATE,
TO THE PRESENT
STRENGTH AND CONSEQUENCE
IT HAS ACQUIRED IN THE EAST.

Written Originally in PERSIAN;
and translated into ENGLISH by

AN OFFICER IN THE EAST INDIA COMPANY'S SERVICE.

James Kerr

LONDON,
Printed by J. NICHOLS;
For T. CADELL, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXXII.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

OF THE

CHARTERED COMPANIES

TO THE EAST

AND INDIA

BY

AN OFFICER OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY'S SERVICE

LONDON

Printed by J. NICHOLS

at the Strand

MDCCLXXII

TO
LAURENCE SULLIVAN ESQUIRE
CHAIRMAN,
AND SIR WILLIAM JAMES BARONET
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN,
OF THE
COURT OF DIRECTORS
OF THE HON. UNITED
ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANY,
THIS
SHORT HISTORICAL NARRATIVE
IS
(WITH THEIR PERMISSION)
MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THEIR MOST OBEDIENT
HUMBLE SERVANT,
JAMES KERR.

TO
THE
HONORABLE
MEMBERS OF THE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF THE PROVINCE OF
NEW SOUTH WALES
IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED
BY
ORDER OF THE COUNCIL
THE
SPEAKER
OF THE COUNCIL

PRESENTED BY THE
SPEAKER OF THE COUNCIL



IN WITNESS WHEREOF
THE SPEAKER OF THE COUNCIL
HAS HEREUNTO SET HIS HAND
AND SEAL
THIS 10th DAY OF MAY 1901

JOHN WATKINS
SPEAKER OF THE COUNCIL

P R E F A C E.

THOUGH the Hindoo Government and Religion are known to have subsisted all over India from the earliest ages till the Mahometan invasions, and the Mahrattahs are only *one* of the various Tribes of the Hindoos; yet the power which is now understood by the Mahrattah Empire, and which has been so long formidable to others in the East, does not seem to be of very ancient origin.

What composes the following sheets is the substance of an account of its rise and progress given me above two years ago by a Mahometan native of Hindostan, whom I retained

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in my pay as a teacher of the Persian Language. This man's knowledge and readiness in the general history of his country induced me to give more credit to his information than to any other I had opportunities of receiving; and my opinion of him as a man of integrity, intelligence, and observation, was the more confirmed, from his having been frequently selected as such by some gentlemen who had long resided in that part of the country, and who like myself were anxious to have with them an intelligent native, whose situation and character in life gave them confidence in his relation either of the manners and customs, or the historical events, of India.

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It was at my particular desire that this man wrote the Narrative I now offer to the public, though at that time I had no idea in translating it beyond my own improvement in the language, and information on the subject; otherwise it is probable the reader might have received likewise more information in perusing it than can now be well expected; as in that case the plan no doubt would originally have been more extensive, and the events composing it more circumstantially related.

He had however my strictest injunctions to be careful in not misleading me; and under my own inspection he collected what he could

from Persian manuscripts *. Oral tradition and the best received accounts of the more recent times supplied the rest.

But, when the possibility ceases of reputable authors and authentic records being consulted, a narrative of this kind cannot be expected to be always very exact in the detail, either with regard to time, or the less important circumstances.

General notions are at most what under such disadvantages it can convey; but even that is useful, especially as a general knowledge of this subject seems wanted, and as the hum-

* The only Historical Guide to this subject; since the Mahrattahs themselves (as far as I have been able to find out) have no such of their own.

ble attempt now made to communicate that knowledge may lead and induce to more minute researches others, whose opportunities of information have been or may be more favourable to success than such as I pretend to.

Respecting the translation, I shall only observe, that though not a perfect adept in the Persian language, yet my knowledge of the author's native tongue* (the Moors) which a residence of

* The translation was principally made when I had the immediate assistance of the writer of the original manuscript; an advantage I carefully availed myself of, well knowing the necessity in general of such a precaution; for, exclusive of every consideration respecting the language, there is but too frequently in the native inhabitants (from whom the best information might naturally be expected) a prevailing fervility of spirit, in wishing at all events

of near ten years in India, not a little application, and much intercourse with the natives, enabled me to acquire, sufficiently removed every inconvenience arising from deficiency in that point.

Yet, after all, I own it is with diffidence, and rather with reluctance, that I publish to the world what, notwithstanding my own belief of the facts, I never intended to have at any rate gone farther than the small circle of my intimates in India. But

to please, with a dislike at the same time to betray their own ignorance; which is a very great bar to the satisfaction of the European enquirer, whose aim is truth. Those gentlemen who have resided any time in India, and made the disposition of the natives a part of their study, will, I believe, readily acknowledge the justice of this remark; which my own experience and repeated observation have long taught me to guard against.

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the opinion of a few friends and respectable characters in the literary world here has induced me to believe that, even supposing the imperfections it may not be altogether exempted from, such a narrative at this time would not be unacceptable or uninteresting to the Public ; and its being given solely for their information will, I trust, serve much to secure their candour for what errors in it they may now or hereafter discover.

Before I conclude the preface, I deem it an act of justice to the writer of the narrative (the original of which I have now before me) as well as for the satisfaction of the reader, to remark, that the History of
the

the Mahometan Conquerors of Hindostan, by Ferishta, is quoted by him as his authority for the first part of his account, viz. that of Rhumba and Sumba. Another Persian manuscript, which treats particularly of Allumgeer's [Aurungzebe] conquests, he says, is his guide concerning what respects the second part, viz. that relative to Sewajie. And the last historical record which aided him in compiling this little work I find to be the history of Bahadar Shaw, son and successor to Aurungzebe.

JAMES KERR.

London,
Dec. 1, 1781.

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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE, &c.

WE find by this Narrative that what is now understood by the Mahrattah State, had its origin but about two hundred years ago : and that Chance and Fortune have contributed more to its rapid rise and progress, than either the wisdom of its founder or the plans of his successors.

It would perhaps be judged a presumptuous prediction, and unauthorized by appearances at this period, to say that they have already arrived at their

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highest

highest pitch of power ; and that it would not be at all extraordinary if they are shortly seen losing their influence in India, as quickly as we know they have acquired it. Yet it cannot be denied that however much their national character may favour the making of conquests, their political principles are not by any means calculated to preserve them.

But this account of the Mahrattahs which I now give to the public, not touching upon their Civil Government, I shall not here intrude on the prerogative of an Historian, but confine myself intirely to that of a Translator, and in idiom only shall I differ from the original, which simply relates such historical events and military transactions, as have had an evident

dent tendency in aggrandizing a people, who, from what we can learn, till the æra abovementioned, has only been known, even in their own country, as one of the various casts, or tribes of that religion, which, from the most ancient history, appears to have been the established one in Hindostan.

The first Mahrattah Chief who settled at Sattarah (the chief seat of the still nominal sovereign of these people) was one Rhumba, a native of Oodapoor, the capital of Marawar. He was not then called Rajah, but only Chief, or Rowsaib. Twenty coss round that place, terminated the bounds of his government. He had a body of betwixt two and three thousand horse, consisting rather of

those who chose to follow, and share his fortune, than troops in regular pay. With these he used to ravage and plunder the neighbouring countries of the Cockun, Ahmudnagur, and Bejapoor; and by such means, more than by the revenue of his own uncultivated district, he collected about three lack of rupees a year. His personal retinue consisted of about 100 good horse, an elephant, and some camels. It was he who first built the fort of Sattarah, which has since been encreased from time to time. His father was cousin to the Oodapoor Rajah; and though a man of no particular consequence in the government, yet, from his connection with the Rajah, he had a stated salary for the support of his family.

Rhumba

Rhumba was a youth of dissipated manners : and one day, soon after his father's death, when he was in a state of intoxication, he murdered a man ; for which crime he was immediately confined ; and notwithstanding all the interest that could be made for him, the Rajah was determined on putting him to death ; but his mother bribed the gaoler to permit his escape. This malconduct of his was the original cause of that mode of life to which he afterwards betook himself, and which indeed seems to have been best adapted to his roving spirit. He fled to Eugene, the capital of Malwa ; and from thence, after a few days stay, he proceeded to Affeer, in the province of Kandess ; and there he entered

into the service of Rajah Alee Kawn. Distinguishing himself on some occasion in the character of a private seapoy, he was promoted to the command of an hundred horse, in which station he gained both credit and wealth. He remained at Affeer till the death of his benefactor, who leaving no issue, that province fell under the dominion of the king of Delli, then Jehanguire, on which Rhumba had his fortune again to seek.

It was at this time he went and settled at Sattarah, where he lived, in the manner as related, forty years.

Rhumba was succeeded by his only son Sumba; who, in imitation of his father, lived by maroding the neighbouring countries; and this he was the better enabled to do, by the riches which

which had descended to him. He awed the whole Decan, and obliged many of its Zemindars to pay him a chout or tribute, by consenting to which they were freed from his pillaging excursions.

By these means his annual income amounted to six lack of rupees, which enabled him to keep up a body of five thousand horse. He, and Jacoot Cawn Hubshie, a governor of Rajpoorie, were in the strictest friendship, and, acting in concert, used frequently to enjoy the fruits of their rapine together. Sumba latterly possessed great wealth, from the following cause.

Mullick Umber Hubshie, governor of Dowlatabad, having thrown off his allegiance to the king of Bejapoor, to

whom he was a tributary, and depending on the strength of his fort, and the flourishing state of his treasury, he for some years omitted paying the usual tribute to that prince, who at last sent an army to bring him to subjection.

Mullick Umber, upon this occasion, applied to Sumba for his aid; and that chief, seeing the prospect of advantage, which would accrue to him from his compliance, lost no time in repairing to Dowlatabad, with his whole force, and by his assistance, Mullick Umber gained a compleat victory over his master's troops; which being reported to the Bejapoor king, he wrote privately to Sumba, upbraiding him for having engaged as an ally
with

with a slave*, and at the same time inviting him to join in the cause of justice, and assist in punishing the rebel, promising to reward him with half the treasure that might be found in Dowlatabad. To which Sumba replied, that if he (the king) would make over to him the right of a certain portion of land (which he described) either from Bejapoor or Dowlatabad, he would in that case take upon himself the reduction of Mullick Umber to obedience.

The king, unwilling to give up the entire right to any part of his dominions, would not accede to this

* Mullick Umber had been originally a slave of Nizam Beyhrie's, the former governor of Dowlatabad, who had adopted him as his own, and thereby succeeded to his fortunes; a thing not extraordinary in the East.

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proposal, but, as an equivalent for
 what services Sumba might perform,
 promised him a chout from his whole
 revenue. Sumba judged this offer
 too advantageous to be rejected ; and
 the alliance he had formed with Um-
 ber was not, according to his ideas, a
 sufficient cause for his not accepting
 it. How the business was to be ac-
 complished was his only concern. He
 wrote to the Buckshie of the king's
 troops, who, upon his defeat, had re-
 treated with his army near the capital,
 Bejapoor ; that, in order more easily
 to effect the purpose, it would be re-
 quisite still to preserve an appearance
 of friendship with Umber, and there-
 fore he proposed remaining at Dow-
 latabad, till the Buckshie should ap-
 proach with his troops, which he
 urged

urged the necessity of doing with all possible speed; for he dreaded that a delay might discover his treachery, and thereby render his services unnecessary to either party, and most likely insure the resentment of one of them.

The Buckshie, on the receipt of Sumba's letter, marched with all possible speed to Dowlatabad, where, on his near approach, he found that Umber, with his supposed friend Sumba, was encamped. Hostilities soon commenced, and skirmishes continued, for five or six days, without any superiority gained on either side. Sumba, who had not yet thrown off the mask, during this time was rather a spectator, than an actor in the field, except in preparing for the execution
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of his scheme, by giving frequent intelligence to the Buckshie of all Umber's plans, which he was well-enabled to do, by the confidence which that unfortunate man reposed in him.

After some days had thus elapsed, he withdrew his party to a small distance from Umber, to whom (in order to prevent suspicion) he went in person, and accounted for this manœuvre, by proposing, as the most eligible method to insure victory, that he would stand aloof, as a corps of reserve, to support him as necessity might require. This was readily agreed to by the unwary Umber. Towards noon, Sumba sent to acquaint the Buckshie, that now was the time for deciding who should be conqueror, desiring he would immediately

com-

commence an attack; and that he (Sumba) would at the same time, direct his, on a different quarter.

Having previously assembled his officers, and given orders, that his people should put no balls in their pieces; but only to preserve the appearance of opposing the Buckshie's troops, till he should give the signal to draw their sabres, when they were instantly to use them against those of Umber. He now advanced, as if to support the man, whose ruin he was meditating, and at last effected.

Umber, who little suspected the perfidious plot of his profest friend, and having likewise the utmost confidence in his courage and military skill, was easily prevailed upon by him to retire, with a few attendants,
to

to refresh himself under the shade of some trees on the banks of an adjacent tank ; for by this time he had sustained some of the enemy's onsets, and had attacked likewise in his turn. Sumba soon gave the signal to his troops ; and when Umber's son, who remained in the field, discovered the treachery, he sent immediately to acquaint his father therewith, and determined to sell his own life as dear as possible. But after dealing destruction to many of those who pressed on him, he was at last slain, being overpowered by numbers, before he could receive any assistance from Umber, who, when preparing to come to his son's relief, was furrounded by a party from the Buckshie's army ; and though he made every effort that courage and
despair

despair could suggest, yet at last, being covered with wounds, faint with fatigue, the loss of blood, and want of water, he fell down, and was carried to the Buckshie's tent, where he soon after died. A total rout of his army ensued.

After Umber's defeat in the field, the Buckshie and his friend Sumba went towards the fort of Dowlatabad, which was now in an entire defenceless state. Umber's wife, however, could not be prevailed on to open the gates, till she was satisfied that herself, with the other women of her family, would be permitted to go where they pleased, without the least violence being offered to their honour. This the Buckshie agreed to, but would not permit their carrying any thing off,

off, except their wearing apparel ; at the same time assuring them, in that case, of an escort to conduct them, in safety, to wherever they chose to go. Matters being thus adjusted, the third day after the battle, the Buckshie took possession of the fort, and sent the women of Umber's house to the Rajpoozie governor, through whom Umber's unfortunate acquaintance with Sumba first commenced.

When these tidings reached the Bejapoorking, he was elated with joy, and, being desirous to visit the city and castle of Dowlatabad, he set out, and soon arrived at that place, where finding immense wealth, he paid Sumba much more than the price agreed on for his treachery, and after treating him with many marks of distinction,

tion, he conferred on him the title of Rajah, and gave him the grants for the chouts, as before stipulated.

Sumba was the first Rajah (according to this account) that ever was in Sattarah, which in his time only began to be populous. When he was so promoted, he forsook his original way of life, that of maroding and plundering, and lived in a manner more becoming his new dignity. He used after this period to pay a visit regularly twice a year to his benefactor the Bejapoor king, who always shewed him great respect; at one time in particular, when the king's son was married, Sumba with his whole family went by invitation to celebrate the nuptials.

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When the king died, his eldest son and successor Abraham Adil Shaw shewed Sumba the same marks of friendship and attention as his father had done, and used to employ him whenever he had occasion for his military skill and prowess, having great reliance on him, as a man possessed, in an ample degree, of both. Sumba, when he was ninety years of age, and of course unfit to undergo the fatigues of campaigning, delivered over the command of his troops to his only son Sewajie, then about thirty years old, and sent him to Bejapoor, to perform what services the young king might require of him. Sumba but a short while survived his retirement; and was succeeded by the above mentioned Sewajie, who, soon after his father's death,

death, was confirmed in the title of Rajah by the Bejapoor king, in a full Mujlis, or court, assembled for that purpose.

Sumba by his own abilities and courage, with an unremitted exertion of cunning and finesse, the true characteristics of a Mahrattah, had raised himself by a rapid progress to that degree of consequence we see him arrived at; and Sattarah was now become of considerable importance from the tributes annexed to it.

It was about this time Shaw Jehan sent his son Aurungzebe to subdue the young king of Bejapoor, Abraham Adil Shaw; who, after his father's death, had thrown off his allegiance to the court of Dehli; and that city being reduced by the death

of the king, who fell in battle, Sewajie fled to his own capital of Sattarah ; but Aurungzebe foreseeing that the turbulent and ambitious spirit of that chief would ever be dangerous to the peace of the decan, sent a detachment to lay Sattarah waste, and if possible to get hold of Sewajie himself ; but, on the approach of his pursuers, Sewajie made his escape to Gueriah. Sattarah on this occasion was plundered and burnt, but no force left behind, as the country round was thought of but little consequence.

Sewajie, after remaining a twelve-month at Gueriah, seeing no prospect of Aurungzebe's quitting the decan, turned his thoughts towards getting firmly settled in his own dominions ;

dominions ; and for this purpose he went, in an humble manner, with his family, to Bejapoor, and wrote a petition, which was presented to Aurungzebe, and seconded by that prince's Dewan, who was a Hindoo, and well inclined to Sewajie's interests ; setting forth, that both he and his father were Zemindars, or landholders of the Bejapoor king, and by the tenor of their grants were obliged to attend whenever his service required it, but now that the decan was subdued, and in possession of the king of Dehli, he hoped that he might be forgiven for what had passed, and permitted to take possession of his former territories, with the chout confirmed to him, as in the king of Bejapoor's time ; for all which he would

be ready to execute what services he might be ordered to perform. Aurungzeb was prevailed on, though with reluctance, to restore and confirm Sewajie in Sattarah; but as to the chout he petitioned for, his father's, Shaw Jehan, permission was first to be obtained.

Sewajie, upon this answer, only in part satisfactory, was still importunate with his request, that Aurungzebe, whom he looked upon, he said, as his benefactor and protector, would intercede with his father for the confirmation of the chout, as it was impossible for him to go to Dehli, or otherwise gain his point, but through his intercession. The prince however gave him to understand, that till he had rendered him some piece of service, and shewn himself worthy

worthy of favour, he need expect no further indulgence than had been already granted him. And Sewajie, finding the prince determined, lost no further time, but went to Sattarah, and remained quiet during the five following years, without enjoying the chout he wished for, or attempting by force to make good his pretensions.

When Aurungzebe, by his father's orders, left that part of the country, to enforce the payment of a tribute from Tanna Shaw, the king of the province of Telingan (whose capital is Hyderabad), he then found it necessary to put Sewajie's abilities and attachment to the test, as Tanna Shaw refused to comply with the demands that were made of him, alledging,

that his forefathers, who had sat on that throne during a great length of time, had never paid the tribute required by the king of Dehli; and at the same time avowed himself ready to resist force by force, should any be used to compel obedience. The rainy season now approaching, Aurungzebe declined commencing hostilities himself, as he could not stay to prosecute the siege; he therefore resolved to employ Sewajie to lay waste the country, which, from his knowledge of it, and the Mahrattah mode of fighting, he was well calculated to effect. Sewajie was accordingly sent for; and the prince told him, that if he would remain near Hyderabad, and by marauding, pillaging, and otherwise destroying the country, weaken the power of Tanna Shaw, he would secure

cure to him the chout he formerly petitioned for. Having given Sewajie some money for the payment of his troops, and recommended to him to avoid risking a general engagement with what force Tanna Shaw might send to oppose him, Aurungzebe returned to Bejapoor.

Sewajie, in compliance with the prince's commands, continued on the borders of Hyderabad for near a year, executing the orders he had received; when at last Tanna Shaw, tired out with the inroads of an enemy he never could subdue, and in order to preserve his distressed districts from entire ruin, wrote to Sewajie, upbraiding him for entering into the service of the king of Dehli, and thus destroying that country which had given them both birth,

birth, meaning the Decan; and at the same time offering him a chout from his revenues, if he would desist from his depredations, and form an alliance with him.

Sewajie was well pleased with this proposal; but fearing the wrath of Aurungzebe, he was obliged to act cautiously. He wrote, in answer to Tanna Shaw, that since the king of Dehli had got possession of Bejapoor, his power and authority were great in the Decan; and that necessity alone had obliged him to acknowledge the conqueror, who had agreed to restore his chout for the services he was now employed upon. But if Tanna Shaw would make over to him a chout from his province, he would leave off molesting him, and form a friendship with

with him ; only, that the business must be managed with address, lest it should come to the ears of Aurungzebe.

Sewajie, on receiving the requisite grants from Tanna Shaw, adopted the most likely method to promote his own views, and to preserve the secrecy so favourable to their success. He wrote to Aurungzebe ; setting forth the services he had performed, which, he said, no doubt, must have been related to him by the distressed people of the country he had laid waste ; and, pretending a bad state of health, he requested leave to return to Sattarah. This Aurungzebe consented to ; but insisted that he should leave behind him some trusty troops, who were well acquainted with the country,

country, in order to continue the destructive depredations he had begun.

Sewajie accordingly came to Sattarah, but brought with him the flower of his army. The few he left behind were only to preserve appearances.

Much about this time Shaw Jehan's affairs towards Cabul and Kandehaar required the presence of Aurungzebe and his army, who, in consequence of orders from Dehli, left Bejapoor with only a small body of troops for its safety, and the peace of the Decan. Tanna Shaw thought this a favourable opportunity to retaliate for the injuries he had suffered; and accordingly set out for Bejapoor; and sent for Sewajie, who, secretly repining that his chout had been stopt ever since Aurungzebe had got possession

session of that country, and thinking this an excellent opportunity to secure himself, without waiting the fulfilment of Aurungzebe's promises, readily came to Tanna Shaw's assistance, in order to compleat his engagement.

The Naib, whom Aurungzebe left behind him, falling in battle, his whole troops were beat off the field. The Killidar of the fort then sent to Sewajie, to expostulate with him for so ungrateful a conduct to his benefactor, and thus repaying the lenity and favour that had been shewn him on a former occasion, when Bejapoor was subdued by Aurungzebe, at which time he had fled from that place, and likewise from his own fort (Sattarah); but, by the indulgence of the conqueror, he had been permitted to

return and enjoy in peace the last-mentioned place : that his now taking the advantage of Aurungzebe's absence to be accessary in bringing and assisting his enemies, was treachery and ingratitude of the deepest dye. Sewajie denied the charge of having brought Tannah Shaw against Bejapoor ; and said, that he had only joined him from a motive of recovering what was his right, since Aurungzebe had refused paying him the chout the former king of Bejapoor had done. But if he (the Killidar) would consent to pay him the arrears on that score, he would engage to remove Tannah Shaw's army. The Killidar, knowing the place must fall if the enemy persisted, agreed to pay him seven lack of rupees. Sewajie

however sent to inform him that that was not sufficient; for that Tannah Shaw would not be prevailed upon to withdraw his army without a sum equivalent to the expence he had been at. To which the Killidar replied, that he would consent to a small amount; but had it not in his power to give any thing considerable.

Sewajie, thinking the success of the siege precarious, and having no reason to be dissatisfied with the terms he had made for himself, and not entirely free from the apprehension of the consequence that might ensue on Aurungzebe's being informed of his behaviour, strongly advised Tannah Shaw, with whom he had much influence, to accept of some money, and relinquish the attempt of taking
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the place, since it would cost him much ; and the success was far from being certain, as the fort was strong, and he had reason to believe was well provided for a defence. He likewise urged, that if Aurungzebe should return, and oblige them to raise the siege, it would be disgraceful to both. So having secured seven lack of rupees for himself, and seven lack for Tannah Shaw, Bejapoor was immediately freed from any fears from that quarter, by Tannah Shaw and his ally Sewajie withdrawing their troops to Hyderabad.

One year's chout soon became due from Tannah Shaw to Sewajie ; it was paid without hesitation, notwithstanding he had of his own free will given Sewajie the seven lack, of rupees he
had

had received from Bejapoor, besides many other valuable presents. The necessity Tannah Shaw perceived to keep Sewajie firm in his interest, accounts for his apparent liberality. Sewajie, having thus increased his wealth, returned to Sattarah.

When Shaw Jehawn was informed of Tannah Shaw's expedition, and of his being assisted by Sewajie against Bejapoor, he consulted with Saddula Cawn, his prime minister, about sending an expedition to extirpate both Tannah Shaw and Sewajie from the Decan. The vizier however advised him to postpone the expedition till Aurungzebe should return from the northward, as, by his having been already in that country, he was the

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fittest

fittest man to be employed on the proposed service.

Aurungzebe, on his return to Dhelli, was accordingly sent to the Decan, but he was prevented from prosecuting the scheme of punishing the disturbers of the empire in that quarter by a quarrel with his eldest brother, Darashikoo ; who, jealous of the power and reputation which that prince was acquiring by his expeditions, prevailed upon his father to recall Aurungzebe from the Decan, and agree to send his own son, Solomon Shikoo, a youth about twenty-two years of age, to execute this undertaking. The order for Aurungzebe's return, which Shāw Jehawn granted with so much reluctance, foreseeing the bad consequence
that

that would attend this measure, reached him when he had advanced as far as the Malwa Province. He was preparing to obey his father's summons, when he had intelligence from court what were the motives of this sudden alteration, and who was to succeed him, to put in execution the service it was first intended he should perform. He thereupon wrote to his father, representing as a grievance his being recalled without any sufficient reason being assigned; and that another being sent to execute the same duty, implied his inability to the task. He therefore declined returning; and waited where he was, for further instructions.

When Shaw Jehawn received Aurungzebe's letter, he shewed it to Da-

rashikoo ; telling him, with concern,
 that he now perceived the consequences beginning, which he had foretold, and warned him against. Darashikoo immediately proposed going in person, with a force sufficient to ensure his brother's obedience to the royal mandate. The king, though entirely averse to this scheme, was so wrapt up in his favourite son, that he had not resolution enough to put a negative on any thing he proposed, however absurd. Darashikoo accordingly set out, and came up with his brother near Eugene (the Malwa capital), where a battle ensued, in which Darashikoo met with an entire defeat, and saved himself by flight. His whole encampment fell into the hands of Aurungzebe, who soon
 after

after this success pursued his march towards Ackburabad, in order to prevent Darashikoo getting into power again. On his near approach to the capital, he wrote to his friends * at court, and requested them to intercede with his father, at the same time making protestations of his readiness to obey whatsoever orders he might receive, either to proceed to the Decan, or attend the king, who, though almost inconsolable for what had passed, yet, in order to prevent an increase of the evils with which the complexion of the times was so replete, consented to Aurungzebe's return. Soon he had too fatal proofs of that prince's intrigues.

* Amongst whom, and not of the least use to him, was one of his sisters, who had warmly entered into all his views. Shaw Jehawn had two daughters, who took opposite parties in their brothers' contentions.

Shaw Jehawn's own imprisonment first, and then that of his favourite son, whom he wished to have succeeded him, were the ultimate steps by which Aurungzebe ascended the throne.

It is to be observed, that when Aurungzebe heard of his brother coming against him, he wrote to another brother of his, Muradbuksh, then governor of the Guzerat province, to come to his assistance; who, from Aurungzebe's representation of the elder brother's conduct, and assurances of the benefit he would reap by opposing him, readily consented to his request, and joined him accordingly, before Darashikoo came up. Darashikoo, upon his defeat, went to Dhelli, where having supplied himself

self with some treasure, he fled to Lahore *.

Sewajie, taking advantage of the domestic dissensions in Shaw Jehawn's family, which at this time subsisted through every branch of it (and thereby greatly weakened the power and influence of the government), assembled all the force he could, in order to attack such places of the Decan as acknowledged the king of Dhelli; and though he could not reduce the

* In this, as well as in other parts of the narrative which treat particularly of the Mogul history, I am sensible it differs often, and sometimes materially, from the English writers on the subject; and though I should never presume, but on the clearest conviction, to call in question what is related by respectable historians, yet I could not condescend to deviate from the original merely to make it tally with other accounts, unless I was first convinced that my own author (if I may use the expression) was particularly to be doubted.

forts of Barampoor, Aurungzabad,
 Dawlatabad, Ahmudnegur, Bejapoor,
 and Bedur; yet, after laying waste
 and destroying the villages of those
 districts, the distressed inhabitants,
 finding they could expect no relief
 from their own capitals, were under
 the necessity of submitting; and a-
 greed to pay the revenue to him.
 The governors of these places did
 not fail to give intelligence to the
 court of Dhelli of what was going on.
 But the distracted state of that empire
 would not then admit of sending a force
 to such a distance, sufficient to punish
 the refractory Mahrattah, who, in the
 course of three years, from the com-
 mencement of Aurungzebe's quarrels
 with his brother, laid almost the whole
 Decan under his subjection. The forts
 of

of Poorunder, Logur, Naffick, Tremuck, Jalnapoor, Galna, Dabul, Culliany, Rhimrie, Kurnalla, Purnalla, Cheul, Hunkie, Tunkie, Mudgur, Hudgur, with many other small forts, yielded to the conqueror; those in the Cockin near the sea-coast belonged to Jacoot Cawn Hubshie, governor of Rajpoorie, with whom Sewajie was in friendship, and were therefore permitted to remain unmolested.

Shaw Jehawn being dead, and Aurungzebe, who succeeded his father, having now nothing to fear from the insurrections of his brothers (one of them having been cut off, and the other two in his possession), and having reigned undisturbed in every other part of his dominions except the Decan, for upwards of ten years, he turned
his

his attention to the settling of that quarter from whence he had so many complaints of Sewajie, and determined to extirpate from it those who had taken the advantage of his absence to throw off their allegiance. After having allotted to his sons, and the different Oomrahs, their several trusts, he set out to pursue his scheme of subduing his rebellious subjects in the Decan.

Tannah Shaw and Sewajie were the two who had principally incurred his displeasure; the latter in particular had raised himself to an astonishing degree of power, by his depredations in the different parts of that country, of which in fact he was become entirely master, and to punish him was Aurungzebe's first design. He accordingly

cordingly came to Sattarah with a large army.

Sewajie, who to a deep understanding added an extraordinary share of personal courage, was not to be intimidated by the appearance only of an army so much superior to his own; but with his body of near thirty thousand men (which he had then in his service), he hesitated not to face the enemy. Sensible however of his own inferiority, he wisely avoided coming to any general engagement, but in the Mahrattah way continually kept harrassing the king's troops, by beating up their quarters in the night, and attacking their foraging parties: neither did he neglect the method of poisoning the neighbouring tanks and wells, from which the enemy were to have

have their water, by throwing into them the toor or milkbush*.

During six months the two armies lay near each other, though nothing decisive was produced, yet several forts, which had been reduced by Sewajie, were again falling into the possession of Aurungzebe's officers, many of whom had been detached properly provided to effect that purpose, while he himself remained near Sattarah.

* When obliged to retreat before a superior force, or in laying waste the country in the neighbourhood of an enemy's encampment, it is customary with Eastern armies, particularly Mahrattah ones, to throw into tanks and wells, from which the enemy is supplied with water, this species of shrub, from which, when broken or bruised, there issues a poisonous milky juice, whereby these reservoirs are rendered useless, till the return of the rainy season, when the wells are cleansed out, and the tanks, being dried up, are fit to receive the water as it falls.

Au-

Aurungzebe wished much to bring Sewajie to action. He sent a message to him, upbraiding him for his dastardly manner of fighting, and telling him, that it did not become one, who assumed to himself the name of a valiant warrior, to adopt a method used only by thieves and maroders ; but that, like a brave foldier, he ought to meet his enemy face to face. This, however, had not the desired effect : Sewajie's reply was, that he was a Mahrattah, and fought in the manner practised by those people. In the course of a twelvemonth, however, from the time Aurungzebe came into the Decan, though he could not intirely subdue Sewajie, yet most of the country acknowledged his authority ; and for what he could not effect by force, he had recourse to stratagem.

Sewajie being now deprived of the revenues of the country, and the other resources which enabled him to support his army; Aurungzebe naturally concluded, that it would not be a difficult matter to get over to his side several of Sewajie's principal officers, which he attempted with success, by promising Jaghires, and other rewards. This scheme being planned, and Jaifing, the Rajah of Janagur, a chief of the Hindoo religion in Aurungzebe's army, being security to the leaders of those of Sewajie's troops, who were coming over to the king's party, it was put in execution in the following manner.

Jaderow, at the head of Sewajie's malcontents, went, with several other officers, to Sewajie, and proposed

posed to him, to go with their people, and attack the enemy ; which he readily agreed to, and said, he himself would follow and support them. Jaderow had previously sent, to let Aurungzebe know that they were that day coming to join him. The king, that these chiefs might put the more confidence in him, sent the Rajah Jaifing, his negociator, to meet them ; and, on their coming into the camp, he ordered them to be saluted with a general discharge of his cannon ; which Sewajie hearing, imagined the troops were engaged, and instantly hastened to their assistance. But on his nearer approach to the king's camp, he was astonished to see nothing of his advanced party ; and much enraged when he discovered

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their

their treachery*. This however did not dispirit him ; he sent to know the cause of their disgust, and why they had thus deserted him. To which they gave for answer, that they were convinced he must at last fall a victim to his own obstinacy ; as Aurungzebe, who was acknowledged and obeyed by the whole Decan, would not desist from his enterprize till it was compleated by his fall ; nor did they think it adviseable to involve themselves in his ruin. This reply enraged him more than ever, and with the remainder of his army, now not exceeding ten or twelve thousand men, he furiously charged the king's

* Some conferences had previously taken place betwixt Sewajie and these chiefs, relative to arrears of pay, and his prospects of holding his ground ; but the entire repulse of Aurungzebe from the Decan was the only thing he could be prevailed on to listen to.

troops,

troops, and several on both sides fell in the onset. The party, consisting of ten thousand men, who deserted him, were at this time drawn up at a little distance from the main body of the king's troops; and on Sewajie's retiring from the first charge they prevented his retreat, and attacked him on another quarter. A general and most bloody action ensued, in which some thousands fell on each side. Many of Sewajie's people, whose hearts failed them, threw down their arms, and attempted to save themselves by flight; the more valiant of them continued fighting or bravely dying by his side. He himself was at last left with only a few; and though his horse was wounded under him, he continued fighting on foot, and dis-

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playing

playing astonishing acts of valour and despair. Some of Aurungzebe's officers, who had by this time closely furrounded him, told him, that, if he wished for his own preservation, he would lay down his sword, and submit to be carried in safety to the king, who had given particular directions not to wound him, if possible. To which he replied, that it did not become a man, and an officer, to lay down his arms; nor would he (he said) while he had life left in his body, part with his sword from his hand. By this time Aurungzebe came up himself, where Sewajie sat almost exhausted, and addressed him, by telling him, that he was an eye-witness of his valour, of which there could remain no doubt; but

but it was in vain for him singly to oppose his fate against such numbers; and assured him, at the same time, of respectful treatment, if he would lay down his sword, and yield to the fortune which it was impossible for him now to evade. Sewajie, overcome by fatigue and thirst, and seeing the folly of further resistance, at last yielded to the conqueror; but not without saying, that the want of bodily strength only had prevailed upon him to surrender; for that, if he could have been refreshed by a little water, he would have given him still greater proofs of his spirit.

By the capture of Sewajie, Sattarah fell into the hands of Aurung-

1690 *Sent* zebe, about the year of the Hijera
 24 one thousand one hundred and two.

Sewajie, who with his whole family became Aurungzebe's prisoners, at this time had only one son remaining, a youth of about twelve or thirteen years of age, the same who has since been known by the name of Sowrajah. An elder son died about the time that Rajah engaged in the service of Aurungzebe, in his first expedition into the Decan against Bejapoor.

About a year after this catastrophe of Sewajie's affairs, a sister of his, by name Tarabahie, by the means of Affud Kawn, gained admittance to the prince's presence, and in a suppliant manner petitioned for the release of herself, Sewajie's son, and

the women of the family ; whose only crime was, their connection with Sewajie. . She begged likewise, that they might be restored to their family residence of Sattarah. This request she enforced by presenting Sewajie's son, whose confinement was ill adapted to his weakly constitution, and had much increased an illness he laboured under.

The king was moved with compassion, and so far complied with the old lady's request, as to give them their liberty ; but would not consent to their residing at Sattarah. Sewajie now only remained a prisoner ; the rest of his family, accompanied by Berjerow, went to Nagpoor, the capital of Berar.

When Sewajie had been about three years a prisoner, and was despairing of ever getting his liberty from Aurungzebe, he had recourse to stratagem to obtain it. He pretended that, when his son was sick, he had made a vow to bestow on his recovery a certain sum in acts of charity and benevolence ; that now, having accounts of his son's health being restored, he wished to discharge his vow ; and he meant, by the king's permission, to let his army share in his generosity.

This indulgence was readily granted ; and for six days confections *
were

* The giving confectionaries to soldiers may no doubt appear strange ; but, as every country has customs peculiar to itself, so in the East, where the use of spirits is not admitted, the soldiery in the armies, on birth-days or other extraordinary occasions, have sweetmeats, tobacco, and opium, according to the casts who are to
par-

were carrying out of his tent for the foldiers; on the seventh day, watching an opportunity about noon, when there were few attendants near him, he shut himself up in one of the baskets, and was carried out by a faithful domestic past his unsuspecting guards to the tent of the king's dewan, who was a Hindoo, and with whom Sewajie had previously concerted measures for his escape: he was kept here till the evening, when, putting on the tattered garb of an Halkara, he made the best of his way about five cofs distant from the camp, where he mounted a horse which was ready for

partake, served out to them, as the English give drams or punch. This attention to the Company's native troops is prudently also very often observed, as the officer who commands may see it adviseable, to prevent the baneful seeds of jealousy and discontent.

him, and travelled that night thirty cofs. In a few days he arrived at Nagpoor. Not thinking himself safe here, he went to Gueriah, where he lived concealed for two years, notwithstanding all the search that was made for him by order of Aurungzebe; but at last grief and vexation for his misfortunes, and despair of ever being able to remove them, brought on an illness, of which he soon died.

The news of Sewajie's death reached the king about four months after. This happened about the same time that his wife wrote to Jaderow, and the other chiefs who had deserted Sewajie when Aurungzebe lay before Sattarah, expostulating with them, by the misfortunes which their ungrateful

grateful conduct brought upon Sewajie and his family, by joining the enemy in the day of his distress; and as they had established their fortunes by his ruin; that it behoved them, being men of the same cast, (now Sewajie was dead) to recompence, as far was possible, their want of fidelity to him, by doing justice to his son and family, and endeavouring to procure to them Sattarah as a place of residence; they at that time experiencing the greatest adversity, and even subsisting by the charity of their friends.

Jaderow, on receipt of this letter, assembled the Mahrattah chiefs, when it was agreed by them to present to the king a petition in behalf of Sewajie's family, and to accompany it with the widow's letter
to

to Jaderow. Aurungzebe was prevailed upon to acquiesce so far as to permit the family's going to live at Sattarah (the young Rajah only excepted, who should attend his army till he might have an opportunity of shewing himself worthy of favour). The Souraja accordingly attended Aurungzebe (not as a prisoner, but) at the head of some of his father's adherents. His mother, with the rest of his family, went to Sattarah.

In the course of two years the Souraja acquitted himself, on several occasions, as an active and brave officer, and much to the satisfaction of Aurungzebe, who bestowed on him several marks of honour, and gave him the proper writs to take Sattarah and the original districts belonging to it; making him, however, give an obli-

obligation under his hand, that he would obey the king's summons whenever he should be called upon.

The Souraja remained quiet at Sattarah during the life of Aurungzebe, being apprehensive of incurring the displeasure of that prince, who still remained about the Decan, after having entirely subdued that country*, till

* Though the Mogul empire was more extensive in Aurungzebe's reign than in that of any of the preceding Emperors ; yet it is certainly paying him too great a compliment to say, that he ever *entirely* subdued the Decan. It is true, when he took the field, Conquest attended him, and in his life-time his name was a terror to the Hindoo Chiefs of that country ; but we have seen that he was even under the necessity of strengthening the power of the inferior leaders, in order to crush the principal. The whole became his tributaries ; and all, I think, that can be further said, with regard to his expeditions against the Marattahs, is, that he weakened the state, by dismembering it, and making the interest of individuals different from that of the whole collectively. Many of the present Jaghiredars are the descendants of the chiefs by whose aid Aurungzebe got the better of Sewajie.

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the year of the Hijera 1119 (A. D. 1707), when he died at Ahmudnegur, about six years after he had restored the Souraja to the territories of his father.

On the death of Aurungzebe, the army, that had for some years kept the Decan in order, set out for Dhelli, under the command of Affud Cawn, to join the young prince and successor to the throne Bahadar Shaw, leaving behind him the Mahrattah chiefs, and strongly recommended it to Jaderow and the others to be ready, on a summons, to protect the districts of Ahmudnegur, Bejapoor, and Dowlatabad, which lay contiguous to their different Jaghires made over to them by Aurungzebe after the reduction of Sattarah.

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The disputes betwixt the two sons of Aurungzebe Bahadar Shaw and Azim Shaw (relative to the succession) threw the whole empire into confusion; for the governors of the different provinces were much divided in their opinion whom they should acknowledge as their sovereign, some declaring for the elder, and some for the younger brother. In the Decan, the governor of Bejapoor was one of the first who revolted, and held out for Azim Shaw the younger.

Jaderow, with three other Mahrattah chiefs, were then lying near that capital; and on their remonstrating against the governor's rebellion, he told them, that they were not acquainted with the Mogul constitution, and persisted in remaining in Azim Shaw's

Shaw's interest, on which they (the chiefs) refused to pay any obedience to him, and immediately retired to their own Jaghires. The other chiefs of these people, who were stationed near Ahmudnegur and Daulatabad, followed their example, all agreeing, that it was better to stand aloof, till the dissensions betwixt the two brothers should cease, and one or the other be established on the throne; for, by taking the part of either, they would likely incur the displeasure, and feel the resentment of the conqueror, if unluckily they should have given assistance to his opponent.

The contentions between the sons of Aurungzebe daily increased the distracted state of the Mogul empire; which furnished the family of the late

Sewajie with an excellent opportunity to revive that power and authority in the Decan, which they at one time possessed.

Azim Shaw, who on his father's death was in the government of Guzerat, being dissatisfied with such a patrimony, and thinking his right to the throne equal to his elder brother's, wrote to Bahadar Shaw on that subject, and proposed to him an equal division of the empire, preparing, at the same time, to enforce his pretensions, should they not be admitted of. Bahadar Shaw refusing to comply with this demand, he set out from Guzerat with an army of fifty thousand men, and was met in the Malwar province by his brother, at the head of a large army, though
still

still inferior to that of Azim Shaw. Bahadar Shaw even then endeavoured, but in vain, to conciliate matters with his brother, whose obstinacy at last proved his ruin, as he was slain in the battle that ensued soon after the armies met.

The Rajah himself was only a young man at this period; but an uncle of his by the mother's side, named Sumpatrow, an ambitious and artful man, determined not to lose so favourable a juncture of raising the family to its former splendor. For that purpose he wrote to Jaderow, who has already been mentioned, desiring him to reflect with himself to whom it was he owed obedience, and the wealth he at present enjoyed; to forget what was passed, and not
to

to hesitate to embrace so favourable an opening for restoring and confirming the son of his old master, in the power from which the father had fallen, and that the declining state of the Mogul empire now favoured every attempt which could be made to effect so desirable an end.

Jaderow, on receiving this solicitation, consulted with the other chiefs what was to be done; when it was agreed, that they should go to Sattarah, and listen to such terms of accommodation as might be offered to them by Sumpatrow, who, when the interview took place, proposed to them, that, if they would unite their forces under the banner of the Sourajah, acknowledging him as their chief, in return for quitting their Jag-

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hires,

hires, and following his fortune, they should share amongst them two thirds of the profits of their campaigns, and from the other third they should also have wherewith to pay their troops.

Sumpatrow entered into this unprofitable agreement from a view to futurity, without weighing maturely the consequences which might attend so rash a precedent, sacrificing every other consideration to that one of restoring and establishing the nominal authority of the Surajah; and to this injudicious and short-sighted policy is to be attributed, in a great degree, that mode of government which has so long subsisted with the Mahrattahs, where the whole power is lodged in the hands of the Peshwa,

or

or first minister, with some of the principal Jaghire officers, as his council.

Matters being thus settled, Jade-row, who as yet had declined openly acknowledging the Sourajah, now came to Sattarah, and joined his standard. Bajerow, for his faithful services to the Rajah's family, was promoted to the chief rank of this confederacy next to the Rajah himself; and the first incursion of this junto was into the Bejapoor country, which they plundered and laid waste, alledging that they acted by the authority of Bahadar Shaw, whom the governor of that province would not acknowledge; and finding there was no probability of an opposition to their inroads, they readily embraced so

favourable an opportunity of strengthening their power, by getting possession of many of the small forts near Sattarah. They next set out for Hyderabad, and enriched themselves not a little by their depredations in that quarter. Sumpatrow, who had acted all along as guardian to his nephew the young Rajah, judged it political to entrust the whole management of the fruits of their expeditions to Jaderow, thinking, by this, the more firmly to attach him, and the other chiefs, to his interest, in case of a reverse of fortune.

It was in these last-mentioned excursions, in which the Sourajah had also accompanied them, that Badjerow (father to Ragoubah) and his brother Chimnaje first began to be of any consequence,

consequence. These two were sons of one Ballijeram, a Bramin and a native of Sewurdun*, who had commanded a body of five hundred horse, in Sewajie's service : and was remarkable for his fidelity to that Rajah, when deserted by so many of his principal officers, as has already been taken notice of.

Bahadar Shaw had not well got rid of his turbulent brother Azim Shaw (who, as has been mentioned, was slain in battle) when he had complaints, from the Ameers, in the Decan, of the distressed state of that country, from the hostile invasions of the Mahrattahs, who had thus taken advantage of the internal dissensions in the Mogul empire, to raise the low state of their own. Bahadar

* See the Appendix.

Shaw was however guided intirely (relative to the measures he should pursue with the Mahrattahs) by the advice of his Visier Affud Kawn, who had good opportunities of knowing these people, their manner of fighting, and what numbers they could bring into the field, as he had accompanied Aurungzebe in his two expeditions in those parts ; and the Visier, who was likewise thoroughly acquainted with the Mogul government, and knew well how those in power belonging to it were affected, wisely judged it for his master's interest, which he had much at heart, not to risk (by a foreign and most likely fruitless expedition) what at any rate must be attended with a vast expence, the involving the empire in fresh troubles

troubles before it had well recovered from those occasioned by the death of Aurungzebe. The king therefore made a merit of necessity, and set about accommodating matters with the Mahrattahs, in a manner, though in some degree derogatory to his government, yet certainly at that time much more to its real advantage, since he gained the friendship of a people who only could have been kept under subjection by a standing force, much superior to any he could have afforded, at so great a distance from the heart of his dominions, with safety to his government.

He ordered the Visier to write to Jaderow, to desire his attendance at Dhelli, in order to settle the disputes in an amicable way ; but that chief,

dreading the consequences of what had passed, excused himself, by pretending sickness : and the other officers, likewise, from the same motives, declined undertaking the journey, which gave Bajerow the first opportunity of raising himself and family to that degree of fortune at which they afterwards arrived. This embassy to Dhelli was no sooner proposed to him, than he chearfully undertook it, being naturally of an aspiring and ambitious genius : and, knowing life was all he could lose ; whereas, should he succeed, it would equally advance his reputation and fortune ; he accordingly set out, about the year of the Hijera 1121, (A. D. 1709,) attended by his brother Chimnaje, and about 7000 men.

Jaderow,

Jaderow, in answer to the summons he had received, excused himself in the manner as already related; and at the same time told the Visier, that the Mahrattahs had all agreed to acknowledge and abide by the Rajah, son to their old and original chief Sewajie; and, for his own part, he had but little influence amongst them, but thought it would be for the interest of the Mogul government to allow the Saw Rajah a chout from the revenues of the Decan, which would entirely put a stop to their further exertions, urging also, in favour of this demand, the grants they held before Aurungzebe's expeditions into that country.

Bajerow, by his manner and address, gained much the affection of
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the King, which, amongst other causes, had its weight in facilitating the business of his embassy: the proposal was agreed to, after taking an obligation in the name of the Saw Rajah, that he should assist the King with what forces he could muster, whenever his services might be demanded; the expences however of such expeditions to be defrayed by the King, exclusive of the chout.

Bajerow, after a six months stay at Dhelli, returned to Sattarah, where his reception was as favourable as he could wish, and such as his success entitled him to. As a reward for the services had done the state, Sumpatrow and the Saw Rajah appointed him to the office of Purdawn, which is the same as Peshwa, or prime minister. He
soon

soon after this set out, with an army, to collect the first fruits of his new grants, which he carried with him, to shew to those on whose districts they were given. The justness of his claims being allowed, the Decan remained in peace and tranquillity the five or six following years, which terminated the life of Bahadar Shaw, whose death at last occasioned fresh commotions in the empire, and once more gave an opportunity to the Mahrattahs to increase their growing power.

Two sons of Bahadar Shaw, following the example set them at their grandfather's death, disputed the succession, which had not been settled by the late king. The eldest, Jehandar Shaw, who was at Dhelli
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at the time his father died, ascended the throne; the other son, Azimoo Shaw, in Bahadar Shaw's time, had been appointed to the Subadarce of Bengal; but, alledging his pretensions to the crown not to be inferior to his brother's, he set out with a large army to enforce his claim.

Affud Cawn, on the death of the late king, retired from all public business, being now far advanced in years, and perceiving the difficulties he should have to encounter in managing the government, in opposition to the parties formed contrary to its true interest. Every thing therefore was carried on, in the name of the young king, by Seid Abdullah Cawn and Hassen Alli Cawn, two brothers, the one Visier
and

and the other Buckshie. These two, being informed of Azimoo Shaw's intention, prepared to oppose it; and that they might the more easily promote their own views, and preserve the consequence they had acquired in the government, sent for Bajerow, who quickly arrived at Dhelli, with an army of about 12,000 men. His brother Chimnaje, Kunta, and Peclajee (the last grandfather to Fatty Sing) were three of his principal officers on this service,

The Mahrattahs were kept at Dhelli during Jehandar's expedition against his brother, which soon terminated in his favour, by the entire defeat of Azimoo Shaw's army, that prince having with difficulty, saved himself by flight: nor did he
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long survive his disgrace, for he soon after died with grief.

This turn of fortune, however favourable it appeared at present to Jehander Shaw, was far, in its consequences, from having the desired effect; for not long after this victory Furroockfeer, son to Azimoo Shaw, a youth of about eighteen years of age, determined to revenge his father's death; and, if possible, to get himself fixed on the throne of Dhelli. Though he met with opposition at first, yet success soon attended him: for, having defeated his uncle, who fled from the field of battle, he was thereon immediately seated on the musnud, and all the honours of Majesty paid him, but the whole power of government remained in
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the hands of the two ministers, Abdoollah Kawn and Hassen Alli Kawn, who were strongly suspected of favouring his promotion *, and their continued authority was deemed the stipulated reward for their service ; so that Furroockseer was then, and for several years after, nothing more than an instrument in their hands to promote their own ambition ; for as soon as he arrived at the years of maturity, and became sensible of his situation, they did not long hesitate what step should be taken, in order to secure their own power, which

* I believe it is in Dow's History of Hindostan that this revolution is positively said to have been originally schemed, and finally accomplished, by these two artful and ambitious ministers. The general view which is here given of their government serves to confirm the assertion.

they

they saw would decline as the young king advanced in life. They therefore deposed and imprisoned him; and taking Mahomed Shaw, son to Jehawn Shaw, from his confinement, raised him to the regal dignity. It was immediately after the Revolution in favour of Furroockseer, that Bajerow rendered the most essential service to the Mahrattah state; which he effected in the following manner.

As all places of trust and employment in the Mogul government were at that time bestowed on the favourites of the two ministers, who had placed the king himself upon the throne; the Subadaree of the Decan was given to Allum Allie Kawn, one of their nephews; and there being no further occasion for the service of
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the Mahrattahs near Dhelli, the young Subadar was sent to his government, under the protection of Bajerow, who was particularly desired to support and assist him in his new authority. Bajerow, whom these two ministers wished to keep in their interest, was at this time offered a Jaghire in the Decan; but though it cannot be supposed his refusal proceeded from disinterestedness, yet it is said he then declined accepting the offer; giving them to understand, he had a petition to make in behalf of the Saw Rajah.

This petition imported nothing less than a grant of a chout from the province of Bengal, Poorub, Malva, and Guzerat; and the two ministers, knowing the instability of their own

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upstart and ill-acquired power, and dreading the influence and envy of those who were debarred from sharing it with them, were determined to omit nothing, however destructive to the interest, and derogatory to the honour of the empire, to secure the ruling of it intirely to themselves ; they therefore, in complying with this exorbitant demand, may be said to have given the finishing stroke to the power of the Mogul empire in Hindostan, which began to decline on the death of Aurungzebe. To this also is to be attributed the strength and flourishing condition to which the Mahrattah state soon after arrived. Another reason assigned for the ruin of the Mogul empire, and the quick rise of the

the Mahrattah, is likewise imputed to the maladministration of this reign.

It had been a custom established by one of the Mogul emperors in Hindostan, before Aurungzebe, to receive an annual tribute, or tax, from the Hindoos in every part of Hindostan where the Mogul government existed; every house paid so much, according to the reputed wealth of the owner; and as very few of the casts, or tribes, were exempted from this imposition, it was the source of immense riches to the treasury.

The Rajah of Oodapoor, Jaising Sewajie, had a daughter famed for her beauty all over India. Furrockfeer, hearing so much of her charms, determined to procure, if possible, so

amiable an acquisition to his Seraglio. He disclosed his intention to his two favourites, who, always glad of any thing to withdraw his attention from affairs of government, most readily acquiesced; and overtures were accordingly made to the father of the young lady, who, after some scruples, consented to give her in marriage to the king, on these three conditions being fulfilled, viz. That the tax so long imposed on the Hindoos should from henceforth be relinquished; that the country of Oodapoor should be no longer tributary to the Mogul; and that none but his descendents should be supported in their pretensions to the Rajahship of Oodapoor. These stipulations being agreed to, and signed
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by the king, the marriage soon after took place.

Bajerow, after he had arrived in the Decan, and settled Allum Allie Kawn at Aurungabad, returned to Sattarah, with still greater eclat than from his former expedition; nor, in managing his master's interest, had he been neglectful of his own; for, notwithstanding his seeming patriotic spirit, when a Jaghire was offered to him, it is certain, that at the same time he received the grants for the chouts in the four provinces already mentioned in the name of his master, he was likewise in his own name furnished by the same authority with the proper papers for his taking possession of Bhimrie, Culliany, and Sewardun, which yielded

upwards of three lacks of Rupees annually. Bajerow's return to the Decan with Allum Allie Kawn was about the year of the Hijera 1122 (A. D. 1710). Having paid a visit to his new Jaghires, and finished what business he had to do there, he returned to Aurungabad, to wait the orders of the new Subadar.

Every thing remained without any material change with regard to the Mogul government for about six or seven years after Bajerow's return to the Decan, when Furrockfeer (who has been already alluded to) was confined*, and Mahomed Shaw placed

* Confining the Emperor did not satisfy these more than ambitious usurpers; fear and resentment operated so strongly as actuated them to aggravate their former crimes by the commission of others of an infinitely more heinous nature.

placed on the Muffnud: two years had scarce elapsed of this new reign, when a change of ministry at Dhelli threw the whole empire once more

nature. Shocking to relate, this unhappy sovereign had scarcely lost his crown, when he was likewise deprived of his sight in the most cruel manner by red hot wire being drawn across his eyes. Even this deplorable situation did not soften the unfeeling hearts of his implacable enemies; but his murder, by their commands, soon terminated his sufferings. There were two emperors on the Mogul throne betwixt Furroockseer and Mahomed Shaw; but their reigns were so short, and so little interesting, that history makes hardly more mention of them than just their accession and death. Raffee-ul-denhah and Raffee-ul dowlat, two brothers, cousins to the last emperor, on whose death the first of these was taken from his confinement, and placed on the Muffnud; but his exalted situation only hastened his end; for those who had raised him permitted him to live but a few months. His brother was proclaimed his successor; but a natural death, within a week or little more of his promotion, in all probability saved him from the miserable fate of his two predecessors, and made way for Mahomed Shaw.

into confusion, which, as usual, proved in the end of great advantage to the Mahrattahs, who were never scrupulous in espousing the cause that was most likely to promote the welfare of their own state; nor were they long in discovering what side would be most conducive to its interest, at least to its temporary aggrandizement,

The administration of the Mogul government was now lodged in the hands of a number of the nobility who had formed themselves into a confederacy against the two brothers Hassen Allie Kawn and Abdullah Kawn, long since rendered obnoxious to them, by monopolizing the sole authority to themselves, and accumulating wealth, which others thought

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themselves, and in fact were, much better entitled to. These two brothers fell victims to their own ambition.

Nizamul Muluck, who had been the principal in bringing about this Revolution, was, immediately after it, with the entire consent of the other grandees, appointed first minister of the empire; but the volatile disposition of the young king (who was much addicted to pleasures of every sort), being so very unconsortant to his serious turn of mind *,
which

* However trifling the following anecdote appears, yet it may not be improper to insert it, since it seems a corroborating circumstance to this part of the narrative.

It is said, that at an exhibition of some monkeys of a remarkable size, who had been taught to dance and play a number of odd tricks; the king, who delighted in even the lowest amusements, was highly pleased with the agility and readiness of these animals; one
of

which was ever intent on business, and foreseeing the troubles which opposition to the prince's inclination, encouraged by so many of the young courtiers, would probably involve him in, he judged it best policy for himself to make use of the influence he then held at court, to secure something at a distance from it, which would more likely contribute to his

of them in particular (an old one attracted his notice; and addressing Nizamul Muluck, with a significant sneer on his countenance, desired him to observe how the *old monkey* jumped about: this vulgar witticism (from the manner it was spoke) occasioned a laugh, and was matter of merriment to the other courtiers who were standing by; but it had a very different effect on the Visier, who, imagining the king alluded to him (being at this time advanced in life), received it as the highest insult, and (as the story goes) determined, from that moment, to leave the court, where he had for some time observed dissipation and depravity of manners so much to prevail,

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independence than the high office he held : for the dissolute manners of the court, which made his present situation so irksome to him, likewise gave him reason to believe, that, if he was once fixed in a distant province of the empire, he might pursue with impunity such measures as he might conceive most conducive to promote his own ambition ; he therefore, in a little time after he had come to the head of affairs, on pretence of Allum Allie Kawn's youth and inexperience, which he said would be taken advantage of by the Mahrattahs, to the great disgrace and detriment of the empire, procured from the king the Sunnuds of the government of the Decan to himself, and set out with an army of only 12,000 men for that province ;

vince; delivering over his charge as Vifier to Camer Oodeen Kawn, a relation of his own, who, he was sure, would, on all occasions, assist him in his views.

Allum Allie Kawn, being advised of what was going on at the Mogul court, and knowing how soon it was likely to affect him in his government, made every preparation for the reception of Nizamul Muluck, on whose approach he sent his Buckshie, Delawar Kawn, and Bajerow, who still adhered to his interest, to attack him on his march. An engagement was brought on near Barampoor, in which Allum Alli Kawn's Buckshie was killed, and his army, in consequence, although superior in numbers

bers to his opponents, entirely defeated.

Bajerow, after this, instead of returning to Allum Allie Kawn, to assist him in his future operations, went to Sattarah, where letters from Nizamul Mulick to the Saw Rajah soon arrived; setting forth the folly of opposing him in the execution of his orders from the court of Dhelli; that he came with no hostile intentions; nor would the peace of the Decan have been interrupted, had Allum Allie Kawn quietly resigned his government. But the surest and most effectual means he knew to secure the Mahrattahs to his interest were the promises of a confirmation of the chout which had been granted to them in the former reign, together
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with an addition to Bajerow's Jaghire from his own province, besides paying the expences of their army when employed by him.

Bheer, a small Purgunnah in the Decan, yielding about three lack of rupees annually, was the place now ceded to Bajerow. These terms were too flattering to both the Rajah and his Premier to be rejected.

Bajerow accordingly joined Nizamul Muluck with all possible speed at Barampoor, where he still waited, in hopes that Allum Allie Kawn would, without further resistance, submit himself to his fortune : but in this he was much disappointed, since Ameer, knowing he had nothing to expect from the present Mogul administration, was determined to follow the

example of his friends at Dhelli, who had fallen in opposing it*, and resign his government only with his life. He therefore, in less than a fortnight after the defeat of his Buckshie, advanced himself from Aurungabad, at the head of 30,000 men, towards Barampoor, where, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Nizamul Mulick and his adherents, he persisted in resisting that Visier to the last; but in

* The two brothers, Hassen Allie Cawn and Abdullah Cawn, are here particularly alluded to. We have seen a short sketch of their history, and it is here only requisite to notice their exit. The first met his death by a conspiracy formed against him; the latter soon after was taken prisoner, and died of the wounds he received in opposing the confederacy of the other nobles: he had a considerable party in his favour, and had strengthened it by a number of mercenaries; but was still inferior to the force of his opponents, who were headed by the emperor himself; at least his presence with them gave an appearance of the royal sanction to all their proceedings.

every

every skirmish, which hapened almost daily for near a month, he was defeated ; and in the end his own death, which he met on the field of battle, terminated the dispute, and established tranquillity in the Decan. This was the first time that Nizamul Muluck experienced the service of Bajarrow, whom, with his troops, he employed in preventing provisions coming to Allum Allie Kawn's camp ; a service particularly suited to a body of Mahrattahs. These circumstances happened in the Decan about the year of the Hijera 1132, (A. D. 1719.)

Soon after Nizamul Muluck was settled at Aurungabad the Sawrajah himself, with a number of a Mahrattah chiefs, came to pay their obeisance

fance to him. He was received by that Subah with many marks of distinction, according to the customs of the country.

For near eighteen years after this change of government in the Decan the Mahrattahs made no attempt to disturb its peace; but there, as well as in the other provinces of the Mogul empire from whose revenues they were intitled to a chout, they received it regularly by the officers appointed for that purpose, till the invasion of Nadir Shaw*, which threw
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* After the several histories which have appeared of this extraordinary man, and his invasion of Hindostan in the year 1738, it would be presumptuous, as it is needless, to attempt accounting for, or elucidating that matter here. The readers who wish to peruse the history of the event alluded to, will have their curiosity
most

the empire again into the most distracted condition, and afforded those people fresh opportunities of extending and strengthening the power which had, by this time, become so

most fully satisfied by reading "The Life of Nadir Shaw," published in 1773, by Mr. Jones. Though that Gentleman's fame as a scholar and man of genius can receive no additional lustre from any encomium of mine, and therefore I attempt none; yet I cannot content myself by thus simply mentioning his name, without at the same time acknowledging, that it is to a very beneficial part of his literary labours (his Persian Grammar) I am much indebted for what small knowledge of the Persian language I have acquired. Nor are those who are desirous of making any proficiency in the Persian and Arabic tongues less obliged to Mr. Richardson, for his Dictionary and Arabic Grammar. Such aids to so useful a branch of learning have been long wanting. The East India Company at large, and individuals in their service in particular, have the greatest obligations to these two gentlemen, who have so well succeeded in removing the obstacles to the application for this attainment.

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formidable as to be feared and courted all over India.

Nizamul Muluck, who, it is said, contributed so much to facilitate Nadir Shaw's conquest of Hindostan, set out for Dhelli, in order to be present at an event of such consequence as that prince's approach was likely to produce. On his departure from the Decan he left his son Nazir Jung in charge of that government, with but a small body of troops; as he supposed, from the state of tranquillity to which he had brought it, partly by force, and partly by treaties with, and grants to, its former disturbers, that there was little to be apprehended from them. But in the course of a few months Nazir Jung (though victorious) had convincing proofs of the error of

this conjecture; for no sooner had the Mahrattahs certain intelligence of Nadir Shaw's success, than they began to form their schemes of profiting by the general confusion; and the report that prevailed of Nadir Shaw's disposition towards Nizamul Muluck, for his treachery to his old master, was also favourable to their views.

Bajerow accordingly marched towards Aurungabad, at the head of an army of 15,000 horse, and encamped near the capital; he sent an insolent letter to Nazir Jung, importing, that since Nadir Shaw was now on their throne of the Mogul empire, the Mahrattahs (the ancient Zemindars) of this country owed no longer obedience to the Subah of the Decan, at least till he should be
provided

provided with fresh Sunnuds from the new emperor; and that he therefore must abandon Aurungabad, and repair to Dhelli, for that purpose. A demand likewise was made for the sum of eight Lacks of Rupees, to be paid immediately, as a Nalbundie * to the Saw Rajah; and a

* The name of a tax imposed on pretence of keeping the horses in shoes, as the word itself denotes—*Nalbund*, in the country language, signifying a black-smith; and *Nalbundna* to shoe a horse. This imposition is often a very heavy one, as it rather depends on the discretion and humanity of those who collect it, than forming part of the revenues of the state; for it is to be observed, that this and similar extortions are not confined to the enemy's country alone, but friends and foes equally feel the hand of oppression from the rapacious soldiery of an Indian army, when headed by their own officers, whose conduct in general, as it serves more to increase than alleviate the unavoidable horrors of war, is seldom such, to the subjects of those who employ them, as to render less grievous the burthens of an arbitrary government.

challenge to the field of battle, in case of non-compliance, accompanied this letter. Nazir Jung, on this occasion, called a council of war, consisting of eight of his principal officers, by whose fidelity and intrepidity he could only expect success in opposing the enemy. They assured him, that while they had life they would zealously contribute all in their power to preserve the dignity of the Mogul government, and punish those who were now insulting it.

Nazir Jung, with an army of near 20,000 men, in a short time accordingly left the city, to face Bajerow. Both parties met; and, after obstinate skirmishes for several days together, the Mahrattahs were obliged
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to retreat to a considerable distance. They were followed however by Nazir Jung and his conquering army, and had scarce time to rest themselves till they reached the plains of Poonah, where Bajerow, notwithstanding the strongest remonstrances of his officers, was determined to risk a battle. Nazir Jung's army, from their former success, and the encomiums of their leader, accompanied with liberal donations as an encouragement to their valour, continued the pursuit with the greatest spirits; and every appearance gave Nazir Jung room to expect the success which soon attended him. When he was advanced to the plains of Poonah, he found Bajerow's army drawn out, ready to receive him; an engagement

soon began, and was supported on each side with equal vigour for some length of time, till the loss of four of Bajerow's principal officers, who fell in the action, too evidently promised the victory to his enemies. Bajerow, irritated at his fate, and borne away with grief and despair at the consequences which so soon attended the death of these leaders, at first seemed careless of life; and personal courage was the only quality of a general which he discovered, in order to repair the misfortune; for he rushed with fury into the thickest of the battle, where he encountered Timur Cawn, an officer of distinction with Nazir Jung, who, evading the stroke of a sabre which

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which Bajerow made at him, stunned his antagonist to the ground with the blow of a battle-axe. Bajerow, recovering from this, made little more resistance to his destiny, but fled from the field of battle, which was yet bravely disputed by his brother, Chimnajie; who, at last, finding his troops thrown into confusion and overpowered on every quarter, was obliged to follow his brother's example, and thereby compleat the victory of Nazir Jung. It was reported that Bajerow proposed to collect what he could of his broken army, and make another stand at Tilligaum. Nazir Jung soon made his appearance at that place; but, being informed that the enemy had taken
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the road to Bhoorgaut*, he continued his pursuit to this pass; but here he received intelligence, that Bajerow and Chimnaje had descended by the Paigaut† to Cullianie and Bhimrie‡.

As Bajerow had always been highly respected for a warrior, and justly considered to have rendered, on former occasions, the most essential services to the Mahrattah State; which, for near twenty-two years, he managed with fame to himself, and to the satisfaction of his countrymen; so

* The name of a pass (large enough for cattle, artillery, &c.) in those mountains, which divides the Decan from the low country towards the sea coast on the Malabar side of India, commonly called the Cockun.

† Another pass, but only a foot-path, as the word in the language of the country implies.

‡ Bajerow's Jaghires, two places of importance in the Cockun.

this disgrace made the deeper impression on his mind ; he survived it but six or seven months, and during that time could never be prevailed on to visit his master the Saw Rajah, who invited him to Sattarah by a letter written in the most delicate terms, imputing his defeat entirely to bad fortune, which often attends the wisest measures.

Nazir Jung, having pillaged and burnt Poonah, and the town of Sattarah, returned to Aurungabad, famed for his victory, and loaded with the spoils of the enemy. He rewarded handsomely the troops who contributed so much to his success, and issued his orders throughout the Decan for a stop to be put to the pay-

payment of the chout to the Mahrattahs.

Bajerow left three sons. Ballajerow, the eldest, succeeded his father, as Peshwa to the Saw Rajah; and under him, as will appear in the sequel, the Mahrattah state recovered the shock it had so lately received by his father's overthrow, and arrived at the highest pitch of power we have yet seen it.

The imbecillity of the Mogul government, which had been so favourable to his ancestors, likewise continued to facilitate the schemes of Ballajerow; for the extention of the Mahrattah influence in India, till the fatal expedition to Dhelli, and the loss of the battle of Pannypur, about twenty years ago, entirely

tirely changed the face of affairs, and may be noted as the æra of the commencement of its decline, notwithstanding the formidable appearance some recent transactions denote; for, as a state, we find, in a few years after this event, those in whom the government was vested, divided amongst themselves, and resembling too much, by their internal dissensions, that unwieldy empire on whose ruin they had raised their own.

But to return to the narrative. When Nizamul Muluck was informed of his son's success in frustrating the hostile attempts of the Saw Rajah and Bajerow, he was highly pleased with the whole of his conduct; and, on his return to the
Decan

Decan (after Nadir Shaw had re-established the Mogul), amply rewarded the chiefs of his army for their adherence and assistance to Nazir Jung. Nizamul Muluck, though exasperated at the baseness of the Mahrattahs, yet he was sensible of the necessity of retaining in his service some of their principal leaders, with their adherents; and thereby dividing a force, which, if united, would ever be dangerous to his dominions. But instead of Ballajierow, he sent for and appointed Ragoojie Bhoonsla, Rajah of Nagpoor, for what services he might in future have occasion to employ the Mahrattahs upon. Though this chief was related to the Saw Rajah, yet the preference Nizamul Muluck naturally gave him was by

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no means pleasing to the latter, who, besides his just partiality to Bajerow's family, probably dreaded the increasing power of so distant a branch of his own. This preference seems to have been the cause of the enmity that is still said to subsist betwixt that family and Ragounathrow *. Piqued, however, as both the Saw Rajah and Ballajie were, they were not now in a condition to oppose the will of the Subah of the Decan.

Ballajie remained quiet about Satarah and Poonah for some years, repairing, as much as possible, the devastations which followed his father's

* Ragounathrow, or Ragoubah, the Chief whose pretensions to the Mahrattah Government involved the English in the war they now maintain with that State.

disasters; determined however to use his utmost efforts to retrieve them the first favourable opportunity that might offer. Nor was it long ere the death of Nizamul Mulick gave him encouragement to hope for success. That Subah died, when about one hundred years of age, at Barrampoor, in 1748. He was succeeded in the government of the Decan by the abovenamed Nazir Jung (Gazoodie Cawn, his eldest son being at Dhelli), who, as well as his father, saw that the Mahrattahs would be a dangerous rival in power to him, if care were not taken to prevent their uniting and recovering the blow they had received, therefore would never either take the Saw Rajah, or his minister Ballajie Row, into favour again.

It

It was soon after Nazir Jung's accession to the Musnud of the Decan that the Saw Rajah died. But, before his death, in presence of Ballajie Row, and a numerous Mujlis, or assembly of other Mahrattah chiefs and officers, he appointed the son of a Bramin (whom he had adopted as his own) to be his successor, by the title of Ram Rajah, who was however at this time but a boy, and consequently all matters of government, as well as the executive power, became more than ever vested in the Peshwa or Prime Minister.

Ballajie Row's abilities being allowed by all concerned in the management of affairs, and the attachment likewise which was well known to have subsisted betwixt his family and

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the old Rajah's still remaining, every one was ready to promote what political principles he judged proper to adopt for the good of the state, and assist him in the execution thereof.

Nazir Jung, shortly after his father's death, set out on an expedition to settle the Carnatic; yet during that Subah's life his power was too formidable for the Mahrattahs to risk the incurring his displeasure by any further hostile incursions. Secret preparations for taking the advantage of such favourable events as might occur were all that could be done at this time; but soon the unhappy catastrophe* which befell Nazir Jung at

* The reader will find a particular and distinct account of this horrid transaction in Mr. Orme's justly admired History of the war in India.

Gingee, where he was treacherously murdered by those whom he deemed the most faithful in his cause, afforded the long-wished-for opportunity.

Ballajie Row, to repair the misfortune of the state, and indulge likewise his own ambitious views, as soon as he heard of Nazir Jung's death, determined to take the field with what troops he could muster, and levy contributions throughout the Decan, which was now in no condition to resist him. Accompanied with Sud-dabah Toollajie Holcur, and several other chiefs, he accordingly set out at the head of 15,000 men, and went directly to Aurungabad, where he obliged the wife of Nazir Jung to give him fifteen Lack of Rupees ;

which, however, was only part of a greater demand; for the hopes of benefiting essentially, either by appearing to have supported the family of the Subah, should it recover its consequence, or, at any rate, to avail himself of its fall, induced him not only to forbear urging a further demand at present, but likewise led him to be the more easily prevailed on to repair to the assistance of Nizam Ally and Sallabat Jung, for whose safety, after Nazir Jung's death, much was to be feared.

Whenever the critical situation of a neighbouring power affords a probability of gaining an advantage, the Mahrattahs seldom overlook the opportunity; though in this instance they were rather premature: and
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we see them here, as in other periods of their history, fall into that error so common in states where war is the chief profession, and commercial views form no part of their political principles, more ready to snatch with eagerness at whatever bids fair for immediate aggrandizement and accumulating wealth, than planning and pursuing such measures as are adapted for procuring and maintaining more solid advantages.

Ballajie Row accordingly left Aurungabad; but, intent on profiting at all events by the expedition, he began by levying supplies through the country as he went; and about Hyderabad, and the adjacent districts, it is said, he collected near twenty

Lacks of Rupees, for the Zemindars and Pattels, finding he had forcibly received a considerable amount from that city, knew that nothing remained for them but implicit obedience to what impositions he chose to exact.

His hopes, however, as we shall hereafter see, were soon frustrated by a more favourable turn to Nizam Ally's affairs than he had expected, for, while he was thus employed, advices were received of the two brothers having defeated the Afghans*.

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* Or Pitans, a race of Mahometans inhabiting the Northern provinces of India on the borders of Persia, and said to be originally converts from the Hindoo religion. They are a bold and warlike people; but sincerity is not a virtue often ascribed to them. Those of them here alluded to were the Nabobs, or feudatory Chiefs (by birth of that tribe) in Nazir Jung's army,
who

Feizoolla Cawn, then governor of Hyderabad, wrote a congratulatory epistle to his master on this victory, and did not forget to give him an account of Ballajie's conduct, and the consequences of it, in these parts.

Nizam Ally, as may well be supposed, did not mean to pass over with impunity the advantage taken of his absence to distress his defenceless subjects; nor were his threats long unknown to Ballajie Row, whose Vakeel, in Nizam Ally's army, sent him the earliest notice of such occurrences as might particularly affect him. The Mahrattahs were now near Adonilachore; but Ballajie Row, not thinking himself strong enough to who conspired against his life. The reader has been told, in a previous note, where information on this subject is fully to be found.

wait the enemy's approach, returned to Sattarah, where he lodged the fruits of his depredations.

Nizam Ally and Sallabat Jung returned, by the way of Barrampoor, towards Poonah, which they plundered and laid waste ; and, after having the fifteen Lack of Rupees, which Ballajie Row had exacted from Aurungabad, refunded to them, they pursued their route to that capital. The renown of these two brothers was now become so great, that for three or four years after this success the Decan was permitted to enjoy the blessings of peace. But this interval of repose seems to have been dedicated only by the restless Mahrattas to preparations to enforce future demands ; for, as soon as the late

devastation in and about Poonah was in a tolerable degree repaired, Ballajie Row, as also the other Mahrattah chiefs, piqued with resentment at the humiliating condition to which they had been driven, set seriously about providing for a retaliation. The treasury was at this time low; but the inconveniencies arising therefrom were removed by the help of a very rich Bramin of Naffick Trimmuck, who, at the repeated sollicitations of the principal conductors of the proposed enterprize (which they urged was in the cause of religion), was persuaded to risk almost his whole fortune (near half a Crore of Rupees); and Ballajie Row himself, with the other leaders, made up what further supplies were requisite before they could venture

venture to engage openly in the premeditated scheme. A Crore of Rupees being collected, Ballajie Row began augmenting his forces ; and in eight months the Mahrattah army was 50,000 strong in cavalry only, with which he lost no time to invade Nizam Ally's territories, demanding an immediate restitution of the fifteen Lack of Rupees which he had been obliged to return.

Nizam Ally and his brother Sallabat Jung had taken the field on the first intimation of the Mahrattahs approach ; and now both armies being encamped near Ahmudnagur, Nizam Ally, perceiving that he would not be able to cope with the force he had to oppose, sent overtures of accommodation to the Mahrattah

rattah chief. But Ballajie Row, finding his strength superior to that of his enemy, his answers only bespoke a determination to enforce his demands, should they not be otherwise complied with. This brought on some very warm and frequent skirmishes. Still nothing decisive was the consequence, till a manoeuvre proposed by a Sud-dabah*, and agreed to by Ballajie Row and the other chiefs, produced the desired effect. It was this: About a third of their army was detached to plunder and lay waste several Purgunnahs of the Decan, which they knew had no troops left for their defence, and which mostly belonged to Nizam Ally's officers,

* A nephew of Ballajie Row's. See the more particular account of this family at the end of the narrative.

who

who consequently were particularly affected by the depredations the Mahrattahs were making in their Jagheers; they therefore remonstrated with their leader on the necessity of concluding a peace.

Nizam Ally had no other resource but compliance. And one great objection which stood in the way, namely, the payment of the fifteen Lack of Rupees, was removed by the Jagheerdars, to whom collectively it was but of little importance, in comparison to the losses they would otherwise sustain, besides the danger of the Mahrattahs getting possession of their different forts.

Shawnawaz Cawn was accordingly sent from Nizam Ally with fresh proposals,

posals, and at all events to accommodate matters with Ballajie Row. The Chout being granted, and other demands likewise complied with, the two armies quitted the field, the Mahrattah for Poonah, and the Mogul for Aurungabad.

On Ballajie Row's return to Poonah he wished to disband a great part of his troops which had been retained for this last service, on account of the vast expence incurred by so large an army. This impolitic measure, however, was wisely opposed by the other chiefs, as it would have risked the loss of every advantage the state had so recently acquired, by inducing Nizam Ally to attempt retrieving what he had lost. And in order to raise fresh
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supplies, an expedition was set on foot against Hyder Naig's* dominions, which again involved the Mahrattahs, and the Subdah of the Decan, in fresh troubles; for Hyder complained to Nizam Ally, as chief Lord of that whole country, but he had soon reason to repent espousing Hyder's cause; for disgrace, and the most

* Better known by the name of Hyder Allie, the famous usurper of the sovereignty of the Maissore country, and may be considered in that principality as the Peshwa has so long been in the Mahrattah State, who, though he acknowledges a superior, takes care to preserve every power and authority in his own hands; for, if my information is right, there is still a nominal Rajah of that kingdom. Hyder Allie is a personage pretty well known in the history of English politicks in India; and it would much exceed the limits of an elucidating note to a work of this nature (which in itself is only meant to convey a general kind of knowledge) to give a particular account of a man who has made, and still continues to make, so conspicuous a figure in Eastern history.

mortifying concessions, were the consequence. When he found his inferiority in strength to the Mahrattahs, and that his army was suffering every distress, being pent up in a situation from which it could neither extricate itself, nor receive supplies of any kind, he would gladly have compromised matters, by an offer of forty Lack of Rupees; which not being accepted of, upwards of double that sum was promised. But an extent of territory was now become the object of the Mahrattahs; and at last the Fort of Ahmudnagur, together with Naffick Trimmuck, districts which brought an annual revenue of thirty Lack of Rupees, were put into Ballajie Row's possession.

What-

Whatever claims of tribute the Mahrattahs had from time to time acquired by force of arms, this seems to be the first instance where we find them obliging the Subahs of the Decan to yield them in form the absolute right of any part of the Mogul Dominions. These concessions were made near Bedur. Nizam Ally returned to Aurungabad, mortified with his fate, and meditating revenge.

Ballajie Row, on the other hand, exulting in his success, only thought of embracing every opportunity that might give him a fresh opening to extend his conquests. Scarce a twelve-month had elapsed, when a circumstance fell out which afforded subject of contention for that turbulent and impatient spirit with which both were
ani-

animated. Nizam Ally had 150 horses of a high value coming from Surat to Aurungabad. Ballajie Row, hearing of this, gave directions for their being intercepted, and brought to Poonah, which was accordingly done. They were demanded, but in vain; and this insult occasioned the renewal of war. Nizam Ally took the field, and hastened to Barrampoor, where Ballajie Row and his army then were. Ballajie Row, by the help of his spies, soon had information at what part of the enemy's camp the tumbrils of powder were placed, and found means to set fire to them in the night; when, besides the prodigious havock which the explosion occasioned, the flames communicating to the tents, spread a con-

sternation through the whole encampment but too favourable to the general attack which Ballajie Row had planned, for at this time his horse charged with fury. The fire so frightened the elephants in the camp of Nizam Ally that they broke loose and crushed under foot wherever they went, adding not a little to the terror that prevailed. There was no opposing the enemy, the attack was so sudden, and the dismay so universal. The assault began about midnight; and when day appeared, Ballajie drew off his forces, who by this time were glutted with slaughter, and left a scene of misery and devastation not to be described.

From the advantages now gained,
others of a more permanent and
im-

important nature were soon effected.

Nizam Ally's troops had suffered too much to attempt any thing offensive ; the loss of ammunition and stores likewise gave them every thing to dread ; the enemy were numerous, and had the command of the whole country, which rendered abortive every effort to repair the damage sustained by fire and sword.

Before the expiration of a month, terms of accommodation were finally settled. It was stipulated, that Barrampoor, and the whole province of Kandesh, should be yielded up to the conqueror, who took care to have the treaty put in execution before the two armies separated. All the governors on the part of Nizam

Ally were therefore removed, and those of Ballajie Row took possession.

By this Narrative it appears, that the peace which this last mentioned treaty had produced was likewise but of a very short duration.

The perfidy of Shanawaz Cawn*, Dewan to Nizam Ally, laid the

* When in India I had in my possession a poem in the Moorish language, on the subject of Nazir Jung's assassination at Gingee, and which is said to have been written by a person well acquainted with the different actors and people concerned in that conspiracy. The characters are drawn in lively colours; and there is not a more infamous one amongst them than "*Shanawaz Cawn*," whose consummate art and address is compared to that of a Bawd, alluding to the circumstance of those who follow that profession being generally such adepts in this species of ability.

This note I have judged requisite to insert entirely in justice to the Author of the Narrative, as I know there are other writers who make the character in question appear in a very different point of view to that which he does.

grounds of a commencement of hostilities. A letter from that officer to Ballajie Row, after his master's late misfortune, was intercepted; by which it appeared, that he was scheming the delivery of Nizam Ally up to the Mahrattahs. He was confronted with his own letter, but denied the fact, and insisted that it was a forgery by some of his enemies, to effect his ruin; yet, notwithstanding his persisting in his innocence, he was immediately put under close confinement. Every thing he had, which came to a very considerable amount, was confiscated, and his dignities and powers conferred on Monsieur Buffy*,

* A French officer in the service of Nizam Ally and Sallabat Jing. See any of the histories of the war in India.

who now became all in all with Nizam Ally.

Shanawaz Cawn, in his prison, could not forbear plotting his master's destruction ; but monsieur Buffy, who had profited so much by his fall, was the more immediate object of his resentment ; and he well knew that, till Buffy was out of the way, more extensive views could not be accomplished. He wrote to Ballajie, acquainting him, that Nizam Ally was by no means in a state to resist him, being not only in the greatest want of military stores, but that, excepting Monsieur Buffy, he had scarce an officer of courage or abilities in his army ; that if Buffy, with his party, could be but defeated, a victory over Nizam Ally would quickly follow ;

low; which would ensure to him the entire reduction of the Decan.

This second letter fell into Nizam Ally's hands. Monsieur Buffy was sent for, and a short consultation decided the fate of the traitor. He was condemned to death; and accordingly suffered the just reward of his perfidy.

Some time after this, Nizam Ally sent to Ballajie, demanding, that a son of Shanawaz Cawn, who, on his father's confinement, had fled to that chief, should be delivered up. Ballajie's refusal so irritated Nizam Ally, that he gave orders to seize and imprison the Mahrattah Vakeel, then at his court. This drew Ballajie Row's resentment on the districts acknowledging the Mogul govern-

ment; and the two armies speedily met once more, to desolate and lay waste that unhappy country.

Nizam Ally failed in every attempt, for almost three months, to bring the enemy to an engagement; in which, most likely, the advantage of his artillery would have given him victory: nor had he force sufficient to divide it, and imitate them in sending detachments to destroy such parts of their dominions as lay contiguous to the seat of war.

It was not long till an unavoidable misfortune, increased by a very great oversight and bad piece of generalship in Nizam Ally, gave the Mahrattahs an advantage which did not escape the acute observation of their attentive leader.

Both

Both armies were on the banks of the river Poorna, just about the beginning of the rainy season; and the wet rendering Nizam Ally's artillery of little service, the attacks of the Mahrattah cavalry became more frequent, and likewise more effectual, than usual, so much so, that Nizam Ally, after sustaining a considerable loss, wished to retreat to the opposite side of the river; this was strenuously opposed by his Dewan, Rajah Ram Chundar, who justly dreaded the consequence of this measure in front of a superior enemy. But, notwithstanding that officer's remonstrances, Nizam Ally, at the head of half his army, crossed the river that day about noon. Ram Chundar, who was left with the cannon and remainder

der of the army, was to follow next day. But such a quantity of rain fell in the interim, as rendered the river impassible. The situation of the Mogul army, and the impracticability of the evil being remedied, was quickly perceived by Ballajie Row, who pointing out the certainty of success to Ragounath Row, and his other officers, led them to the charge, which was received by the enemy with equal spirit. But the efforts of valor were rendered ineffectual, from the superior number they had to oppose; and the death of Ram Chundar was soon followed by the entire defeat of his party.

Nizam Ally saw, with an aching heart, the fatal consequence of his error. His officers would have now per-

persuaded him to make all the haste he could to Aurungabad, but he was deaf to their remonstrances, and took a resolution which a few days before would have redounded to his honour, and probably might have been attended with the most flattering success; but which, in his present distressed situation, nothing could justify, and vexation and despair in excess only could have dictated. Reduced and dispirited as his troops were, with them he determined to dispute the passage of the river, and risk the event of a battle, but he had soon reason to repent his obstinacy; for in a few days, whenever the river was passable, the Mahrattahs crossed it, meeting with but a feeble resistance, and were completely victorious in the
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engagement which thereon ensued. Thus unfortunate, he had little to expect from the generosity of his enemies. Threats and insults from Bal-lajie accompanied the negotiations on the subject of a peace, which was soon after concluded; for the Subah was in no condition to refuse such terms as were offered to him, however humiliating. The whole Decan almost was, on this occasion, given up to the Mahrattahs; Hyderabad only, with its dependences, yielding a revenue of about thirty Lack of Rupees annually, remained in Nizam Ally's possession.

From that period we find no exertion in the Mogul government to regain its superiority in the southern provinces, nor objecting in other parts

parts to the regular payment of the chout, till the wild idea of universal dominion in Hindostan was entertained by some of Ballajie's counsellors, and too prematurely adopted by that chief, whose late successes, together with a view of the very debilitated state of the Mogul power throughout the whole empire, induced him too readily to give his assent to the plan proposed for dethroning the Great Mogul, and establishing the ancient Hindoo government; but the loss of his eldest son Wiffwafs Row, and the other fatal consequences which attended the expedition * fitted out to accomplish this design, operated so strongly in his mind, as to deprive him of reason for some

* See p. 108, 109.

months before his death; which soon after followed.

My only aim in giving this translation to the public being to convey some general ideas of a people (at least from that period in which they became considerable as an independent government), at a time when the present transactions in India I judged might render it not unacceptable; I will here drop the narrative, and conclude with a concise account of one family, which, in future times, may be seen of no less importance in the English history with the Mahrattahs than it has already been in their connection and intercourse with the Mahometan powers.

To

To those in the smallest degree conversant in Mahrattah affairs, it must appear I mean that family of Bramins who for several generations, by possessing the office of Peishwa, had engrossed to themselves so very principal a share in the government of that distinguished people. I have already had occasion in the course of this narrative to mention Ballajie Row and other individuals of this family, and I shall now proceed to give a more minute account of it from its first elevation to power.

Wissoojie Punt was a Bramin and a native of Sewurdun the principal village of a small Purgunnah near the sea, a few miles distant from our settlement of Bancote, or Fort Victoria, on the coast of Malabar. He had the
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reputation of being well-skilled in the sciences of astronomy and astrology; and many of his predictions having been believed by the people of the country to have been eventually verified, Jacoot Cawn, Hubshe Governor of Rajpore, on the strength of this reputation, appointed him his secretary and confident in all matters of consequence.

Wissiojie Punt had one son, whose name was Wisshoonaut. When this Wisshoonaut was at an age fit for business, the Deffai* of Sewerdun happened to die without children, and Wissiojie had influence enough with the governor of Rajpore to get his son appointed to that office; and

* This, and other offices of government in the East, generally descends by hereditary right,

when

when his father died, he succeeded him also as secretary to Jacoot Cawn Hubshie. These two offices he held till his death.

He left one son, named Ballajie Ram, who, from his early years, shewed an inclination for the military life, not much to his father's satisfaction, who would fain have dissuaded him from it; but seeing the strong bent of the youth to this profession, he at last consented, and, provided with recommendations from Jacoot Cawn, Ballajie set out for Sattarah, where his first command in Sewajie's service was only a small troop of horse. In this situation his activity as an officer, together with his engaging manners, acquired him the friendship and confidence of all who

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knew him, and soon raised him to higher honours. He particularly attracted the notice and approbation of Jaderow (then Sewajie's principal officer), who recommended him strongly to the Rajah as a young man of distinguished merit and promising abilities. He was hereupon promoted to the command of a hundred horse, with a salary of 5000 rupees a year. His reputation being thus established, when his father died, Jacoot Cawn permitted his succeeding to the office of Dessai of Sewurdun, and to discharge the duties of it by deputy.

In Sewajie's wars with Aurungzebe that Rajah readily discovered Ballajie Ram's abilities as an officer; and, from the favourable opinion he entertained of him, he gave him the command of

500 horse ; with which Ballajie Ram, by repeated instances of valour and fidelity, justified the favours and encouragement which had been shewn him.

He was ever faithful to Sewajie's cause, and at last died of the wounds he received in supporting it, when Aurungzebe subdued that Rajah. His death happened before Sewajie was deserted.

Ballajie Ram bore the character of an able statesman, as well as a brave warrior. He left two sons, the eldest named Bajerow, and the other Chinnajie Oppah, who had both accompanied him some time before his death. Bajerow succeeded his father in the command and honours in Sewajie's service. Chinnajie likewise remain-

ed with him in a more subordinate station, but afterwards distinguished himself by conquering the settlements of Salsette and Basseen *, from the Portuguese, about the year 1740. Both imitated their father in a zealous attachment to Sewajie and his family; they did not desert him in the day of adversity; but, contrary to the example of those by whose disaffection Sewajie's fall was at least hastened, they remained steady in their loyalty to him, and were both taken prisoners when Sewajie, with his whole family, was reduced to that situation. They remained in captivity only about twelve months,

* Two places of strength and importance near Bombay; and now in the East India Company's possession.

when

when they were released, with Tarra-bai, and the rest of Sewajie's family, who, as we have seen in the course of the narrative, went to Nagpore. Bajerow attended them thither; and the reader has been told likewise how he was repaid for his faithful adherence to them, and what change of fortune he himself experienced before his death.

From a general view of the Mah-rattah History it appears, that since Sewajie's time the Rajah of Sattarah, and acknowledged head of the Mah-rattah State, has been nothing more than a nominal sovereign; and that the reins of government have been held by some one or other of the family now in question.

Bajerow had three sons. One of them (the second) died when but a young man. The other two are remarkable in history : Ballajie Row for the successes we have seen his military operations attended with : and Ragounath Row, or Ragoubah, (now living) for his misfortunes, and the part he has borne in the present Mahrattah war.

Ballajie Row had three sons : Wiff-wass Row, the eldest, was killed before his father's death, at the famous battle of Pannypur, in the neighbourhood of Dhelli in the year 1761*, when the largest Mahrattah army that ever took the field suffered an entire defeat by the collected force of the Mahomedan powers in India. This battle proved

* See page 109.

also fatal to Souddabah, the son of Chimnajie Oppa, a man of most distinguished abilities, and who contributed greatly to raise the power of the family. There have not, it is true, been wanting pretenders in India, to personate this man *; though, I believe, there is little doubt but that he really fell on the occasion I have mentioned.¹

Madu Row, the second son of Balajie Row, succeeded him as Peishwa. Ragounath Row, or Ragoubah, uncle to this young man, acted for some time as his Dewan, but by the instigation of some of those in power,

* One in particular in the year 1776, who had raised a party to support his claims to the government, was betrayed into the hands of the ministerial party at Poonah; and, after a kind of trial, suffered death as an impostor.

who had a jealous eye towards Ragounath Row, and saw he was likely to acquire more power and influence than they wished, prevailed upon Madu Row to seize and imprison his uncle; and, during the period of his government (near twelve years) Ragoubah seldom enjoyed his liberty.

When Madu Row died, he was succeeded by his brother, Narran Row, Ballajie's third son. The murder of this unfortunate youth, in 1773, afforded Ragoubah the pretensions he assumes to the government. He was opposed however from the strong suspicion of his nephew's murder*

* The taking the life of a Bramin is one of the sins for which, according to their religious tenets, there is no expiation; and it is a punishment never inflicted on those of that cast, even in the course of justice.

having

having been committed at his instigation.

Be this as it may, he wanted abilities to secure himself against so strong a party of other chiefs as the idea of his guilt had raised. He acted with fear and timidity ; and a civil war ensued. Two years, I believe, had scarce elapsed, before he suffered an entire defeat on the plains of Arrass, in the province of Guzerat ; and fled from the field of battle to Baunagur, a sea-port in the gulf of Cambay ; where, in the utmost confusion, he embarked with little baggage, and a few attendants, on board some open boats, for Surat ; where soon after he (in the beginning of the year 1775) entered into a treaty with the English, who were, in consideration
of

of grants and cessions therein stipulated, to assist him in supporting his disputed right to the Peishwaship of the Mahrattah empire.

In conclusion to the short account I have thus given of this family, it may not be improper to observe, that the wife of Narran Row was said to have been with child at the time of the assassination of her husband, and that she was shortly after delivered of a male child. Great doubts are entertained of the reality of this circumstance; but let the case be as it may, the Peishwaship continues to be administered at Poonah in the name of this child, by the confederated chiefs*, who

* This confederacy is known in India by the appellation of Barrabac, or the twelve brothers, alluding (as some say) to the Mahrattah ministry

who have ever since Narran Row's death acted in opposition to Ragounath Row, and he is styled in the public acts of government by the name or title of Row Punt Purdham.

nistry consisting originally of this number when the Peishwa was not the first in power, as he is now, in that government; but I have been likewise assured, that the present administration, on the death of Narran Row, was composed of the above number of Chiefs.

Received & Read December 14. 1781.

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EXPLANATION of India Words,

As they are to be understood in the Narrative.

Buckshie. Pay-master General of the Troops,
who bears likewise a high military command.

Cast. A tribe, or sect.

Chout. Literally a tribute of a fourth part of
the revenues.

Cofs. A measure, from about one and a half
to two and a half miles.

Crore of Rupees. A hundred lack, or a million
sterling.

Dessai. An office high in the revenue depart-
ment.

Derwan. Receiver General of the Revenues.

Halcarra. A spy, or person whose profession it
is to procure intelligence concerning the
enemy.

Hijera. The Mahometan æra.

Jagbire. A grant of an estate or territory, ge-
nerally made over to a person in consequence
of some signal services rendered, or expected
to be rendered, to government.

Killidar.

Killidar. The military commanding officer of a fort.

Lack of Rupees. A hundred thousand, or twelve thousand five hundred pounds sterling.

Mujlis. A court, or council of state.

Naib. A Vicegerent.

Oomrahs, or Ameers. The nobility of the Mogul empire.

Pattels. The principal tillers or cultivators of land, who are likewise, in a certain degree, farmers.

Peishwa. Now the chief in the Mahrattah government.

Purgunnab. A district.

Rupee. A silver coin, which varies in value in different parts in India, but always betwixt two shillings and half a crown.

Subab. Governor or Viceroy of a Province.

Tank. A lake or pond.

Visier. First minister of state to the great mogul.

Zemindar. Landholders, or Farmers.

P. 154. note. r. *Barrabai.*



F I N I S.

ERRATA.

- Page 41. line 3. *read* Cullianie, Bhimrie,
Ib. l. 6. *for* those *r.* others
63. l. 19. *r.* Malwa
68. l. 18. *r.* Bajerow.
Ib. Chimnaje Oppa; *and the same wherever Chimnaje
occurs*
P. 69. *in the note, r.* see p. 147.
P. 87. *note, l. 14. r.* fee-ul-derjah
P. 94. l. 17. *r.* for that Ameer
P. 100. l. 16. *r.* the throne
P. 106. l. 11. *r.* had managed
P. 115. *after* Suddabah *add a comma*



